

## Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Diligence, Commitment, and Innovation

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Two studies report a positive relationship of employees' perception of being valued and cared about by the organization with (a) conscientiousness in carrying out conventional job responsibilities, (b) expressed affective and calculative involvements in the organization, and (c) innovation on behalf of the organization in the absence of anticipated direct reward or personal recognition. In Study 1, involving six occupations, positive relationships of perceived support with job attendance and performance were found. In Study 2, using manufacturing hourly employees and managers, perceived support was positively related to affective attachment, performance outcome expectancies, and the constructiveness of anonymous suggestions for helping the organization. These results favor the extension and integration of emotion-based and calculative theories of organizational commitment into a social-exchange approach.

The concept of organizational commitment has attracted considerable interest as an attempt to understand the intensity and stability of employee dedication to work organizations. Two major views of employee dedication focus on affective attachment and calculative involvement, respectively, which are usually considered to be conceptually and empirically distinct (McGee & Ford, 1987; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989; Morrow, 1983; Penley & Gould, 1988; Reichers, 1985). The frequent allusion to commitment as the trade of effort and loyalty for material benefits and social rewards (e.g., Angle & Perry, 1983; Bateman & Organ, 1983; Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Etzioni, 1961; Gould, 1979; Levinson, 1965; March & Simon, 1958; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Organ & Konovsky, 1989; Steers, 1977) suggests the possible merit of treating affective and calculative involvements within the context of a process-oriented social exchange approach. Our research examines the role played in such exchange by employees' perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being.

The emotion-based view of organizational commitment emphasizes the employee's sense of unity and shared values with the organization (e.g., Buchanan, 1974, 1975; Etzioni, 1961; Hrebiniak, 1974; Kelman, 1961; Levinson, 1965; Meyer & Allen, 1984; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Affective attachment, as assessed by the seminal Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), is influenced by personal characteristics, job features, and work experiences and, in turn, influences job performance, absenteeism, and turnover (see review in Mowday et al., 1982).

Another view of organizational commitment centers on the calculative aspect of the employee-organization relationship, thus envisioning economic factors to be of primary importance

in employee absenteeism, work effort, and turnover. Employees' role perceptions would be assumed to depend on the types of activities believed necessary for successful job performance (Porter & Lawler, 1968). Performance would increase with the expectation that high effort will lead to desired performance and that such performance will be rewarded (Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, & Weick, 1970; Etzioni, 1961; Katz, 1964; Porter & Lawler, 1968; Vroom, 1964). The desire to remain with one's current employer, termed continuance commitment, would result from the perceived economic advantages accrued in one's current job, relative to alternative employment opportunities (Becker, 1960; Farrell & Rusbult, 1981; Koslowsky, Kluger, & Yinon, 1988; Meyer & Allen, 1984; Rusbult & Farrell, 1983; Scholl, 1981).

Relevant to both of these approaches is the norm of reciprocity, according to which the recipient of benefits is morally obligated to recompense the donor (Gouldner, 1960). Helping others incurs obligations, the repayment of which reinforces giving and strengthens the mutually beneficial exchange of benefits (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger, Cotterell, & Marvel, 1987). Aid that signified the donor's positive evaluation of the recipient would be especially valued because it suggests that the donor can be expected to help in the future in important ways (cf. Greenberg, 1980; Heider, 1958; Jones & Davis, 1965; Organ & Konovsky, 1989; Schopler, 1970). Positive discretionary actions by the organization that benefited the employee would be taken as evidence that the organization cared about one's well-being and therefore could be counted on for subsequent rewards.

Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986) suggested that, to meet needs for approval, affiliation, and esteem and to determine the organization's readiness to compensate increased effort with greater rewards, employees form a general perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Employees from nine organizations were given 36 statements about the degree to which the organization appreciated their contributions and would treat them favorably or unfavorably in diverse

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situations. The employees were found to view their evaluation by the organization as positive or negative to a consistent degree across various dimensions and to believe that such evaluations would influence many aspects of their treatment. Such perceived organizational support was found to be positively related to job attendance among private high school teachers. In accordance with a social-exchange interpretation, this effect was greater among teachers expressing a strong acceptance of the appropriateness and utility of trading work effort for organizational rewards.

The perception of being valued and cared about by the organization would encourage the incorporation of organizational membership and role status into the employee's self-identity and thereby increase prosocial acts carried out on behalf of the organization (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Buchanan, 1974, 1975; Etzioni, 1961; Hrebiniak, 1974; Kelman, 1961; Levinson, 1965; Meyer & Allen, 1984; Mowday et al., 1979, 1982; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; Steers, 1977). Perceived organizational support would also enhance calculative involvement by creating trust that the organization will take care to fulfill its exchange obligations of noticing and rewarding efforts made on its behalf (cf. Blau, 1964; Cook & Wall, 1980; Organ & Konovsky, 1989). Employees may use perceived organizational support to judge the potential gain of material and symbolic benefits that would result from activities favored by the organization. The relationship between perceived support and effort-reward expectancies may be bidirectional. Expected reward for high effort could strengthen and, in turn, be influenced by employees' perception that the organization valued their contributions.

For the majority of organizations that stress diligence in conventional job activities, increasing one's job attendance and performance would provide approved and publicly identifiable ways of reciprocating perceived high support. Innovation and spontaneous problem solving may additionally be associated with perceived support. The employee's strong involvement in the organization has been noted to include performance that goes beyond the call of duty (Mowday et al., 1982, p. 15), including actions for which "the individual receives no immediate reward and which benefit the larger organization" (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986, p. 495; see also Bateman & Organ, 1983; Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Puffer, 1987). Extrarole activities carried out on behalf of the organization play a major influence in organizations' success (Katz, 1964) and have been studied as a type of citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988). Smith, Organ, and Near (1983) found that managers class such supplementary efforts together and distinguish them from standard responsibilities. We report a pair of studies that examined the relationships of perceived support with employees' diligence, citizenship behavior, and expressed instrumental and calculative involvements in the organization.

### Study 1: Relationship of Perceived Support With Employee Absenteeism and Performance

The first study tested the hypotheses that perceived organizational support is negatively related to absenteeism and is positively related to the performance of conventional job responsibilities. To assess the generality of these relationships, measures of absenteeism or job performance, or both, were obtained for

six occupations, with the findings accumulated by meta-analytical statistical techniques.

## Method

### Sample

Descriptive information on the occupations studied is given in Table 1. To encourage candidness, the employees were given written and spoken assurances that their individual responses would be held confidential and that only group data would be reported to the organization. Employees of the one organization having a union (the police department) received additional assurances of confidentiality both from management and union leaders. The questionnaires were given out directly by the investigators and returned in sealed envelopes.

The employees constituting four of the samples filled out the questionnaires at times set aside during the work day, resulting in a return rate of completed questionnaires that ranged across organizations from 97% to 100%. With the two remaining samples, the brokerage clerks and public high school teachers, it was necessary for the questionnaires to be filled out at unscheduled times during the work day. The return rate of completed questionnaires was 73% for the brokerage clerks and was 50% for the public high school teachers.

### Measure of Perceived Organizational Support

To measure the extent to which employees perceived that the organization valued their contribution and cared about their well-being, a short form of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1986) was used. The 17 items loading highest in the original study were used for the first three organizations listed in Table 1; the 9 highest loading items were used for the remaining three organizations. The survey comprises statements concerning the organization's valuation of the employee, and actions it would be likely to take in situations that affected the employee's well-being. Respondents indicated the extent of their agreement with each item on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Representative items include: "The organization values my contribution to its well-being"; "If the organization could hire someone to replace me at a lower salary it would do so"; and "The organization considers my goals and values." In the original study, combining across 361 respondents in nine organizations, a factor analysis indicated a single factor accounting for 48% of the total variance, with an interitem reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of .97.

### Outcome Measures

Correlations of perceived support with the following outcome measures were obtained, as available, in each organization (see Table 1): (a) number of days absent, (b) number of periods absent, and (c) performance. To accumulate the statistical reliability of the findings across occupations, we carried out separate meta-analyses on the correlation of perceived support with days absent, periods absent, and performance. Following the procedure suggested by Hunter, Schmidt, and Jackson (1982) the correlations were averaged across occupations, with each sample weighted according to the number of employees.

The number of periods of absenteeism (blocks of one or more days of work missed) was included because it has sometimes been found to be a more sensitive measure of employee motivation than the total number of days absent, presumably because long absences are more likely to reflect serious illness that requires a doctor's corroboration (Chadwick-Jones, Brown, & Nicholson, 1982; Mowday et al., 1982). Absenteeism records for patrol officers were not obtained because of a stringent absence policy, including a required personal interview with top management following any absence, that kept attendance levels extremely high.

Table 1  
Statistical Information for Occupations

Occupational group	N	POS			Days absent			Periods absent			Performance		
		M	SD	$\alpha$	M	SD	R	M	SD	R	M	SD	R
High school teachers	39	3.70	1.30	.95	6.17	3.92	-.34*	5.36	3.21	-.35*	—	—	—
Brokerage firm clerks	16	4.29	1.21	.94	5.13	3.01	-.43*	4.00	2.39	-.62**	5.13	1.05	.46*
Manufacturing, hourly workers	22	3.86	1.49	.95	3.50	3.43	-.15	3.86	3.05	-.32	3.90	.53	.64**
Insurance representatives	18	4.84	1.04	.80	2.17	2.00	-.38	—	—	—	—	—	—
University resident assistants	121	5.35	.91	.76	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.77	.49	.24**
Police officers	21	3.69	1.09	.74	—	—	—	—	—	—	95.2	44.5	.45*
$R_{xy}$							-.32**			-.40**			.33**

Note. POS = perceived organizational support. N = number of respondents who returned completed questionnaires.  $\alpha$  = Cronbach's alpha. R = correlation with POS.  $R_{xy}$  = overall correlation, averaged across samples and weighted by the number of respondents in each sample (see text for details). For all employee groups except police officers, performance refers to the average composite rating. Dashes denote that no outcome measure was obtained.

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Of practical significance are the average levels of absenteeism among employees having different degrees of perceived support. In contrast with the correlation coefficient, which assesses the proportion of variance common to two variables, a comparison of means indicates the extent of change in one variable as a function of changes in a second variable. Meta-analysis was used to aggregate, across samples, the statistical differences in absenteeism between employees with the highest-third versus the lowest-third levels of perceived support. Each probability was converted to its standard normal deviate (Z score), then these Z scores were summed and divided by the square root of the number of samples. The resultant statistic follows the Z distribution (Rosenthal, 1984).

Evaluations of employees by their immediate supervisors, involving behaviorally anchored rating scales, were available as measures of performance for the university resident assistants (4 rating dimensions) and hourly manufacturing workers (11 rating dimensions). For the brokerage clerks, who did not receive formal periodic evaluations, a seven-item Likert-type evaluation scale was constructed that examined each type of performance considered important by management. The accumulation of data across organizations by meta-analysis increased the external validity of the findings which, as Mitchell (1985) has stressed, is a problem for field studies as well as laboratory research.

An objective performance measure was available for police patrol officers, the annual number of "discretionary citations," which ran the gamut from minor traffic tickets to taking individuals into custody for observed law violations. The patrol officers had negligible control over other kinds of performance recorded by the police department such as the number of occasions they were directed to the scene of accidents or the time spent in court waiting to testify. Therefore, the frequency of discretionary citations and arrests was the primary objective measure used by the police department to evaluate performance.

### Results and Discussion

There was a highly consistent positive relationship of perceived support with employee attendance and job performance. Table 1 gives the mean perceived support score, standard deviation, and Cronbach's alpha for each sample of employees. The internal reliability of the Survey of Perceived Support was gen-

erally high, albeit greater with the 17-item version than with the 9-item version. The supervisory evaluations of the brokerage clerks, hourly manufacturing employees, and resident assistants had alpha coefficients of .95, .93, and .58, respectively. Except as otherwise noted, all statistical tests are one-tailed, the predicted direction being specified by theory as supported by the results of prior research.

As may be seen in Table 1, combining across four occupations, there was a highly statistically reliable average correlation between perceived support and periods of absenteeism ( $r = -.40$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and between perceived support and days of absenteeism ( $r = -.32$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Consistent with previous findings, the effects were somewhat stronger for the periods measure than the days measure (Chadwick-Jones et al., 1982; Mowday et al., 1982). Figures 1 and 2 present the average numbers of periods absent and days absent for groups composed of individuals scoring in the upper third, middle third, and lower third of perceived support. In each of the organizations, the low perceived-support employees averaged about twice as many periods absent as the high perceived-support employees, and the results for days absent are nearly as strong. The overall statistical reliability of these differences in absenteeism between employees with the upper-third versus lower-third levels of perceived support, accumulated across occupations by meta-analysis, was .00005 for the periods measure and .001 for the days measure.

These comparisons were also statistically reliable for most of the occupations taken individually. For periods absent and days absent, respectively, the significance levels were as follows in each occupation: school teachers,  $t(36) = 2.82$ ,  $p < .005$ , and  $t(36) = 2.58$ ,  $p < .01$ ; clerks,  $t(13) = 2.24$ ,  $p < .025$ , and  $t(13) = 1.78$ ,  $p < .05$ ; manufacturing workers,  $t(19) = 2.52$ ,  $p < .02$ , and  $t(19) = .25$ , *ns*. The only measure available for the insurance telemarketing representatives was the number of days absent, which produced a reliable effect,  $t(17) = 2.57$ ,  $p < .02$ .

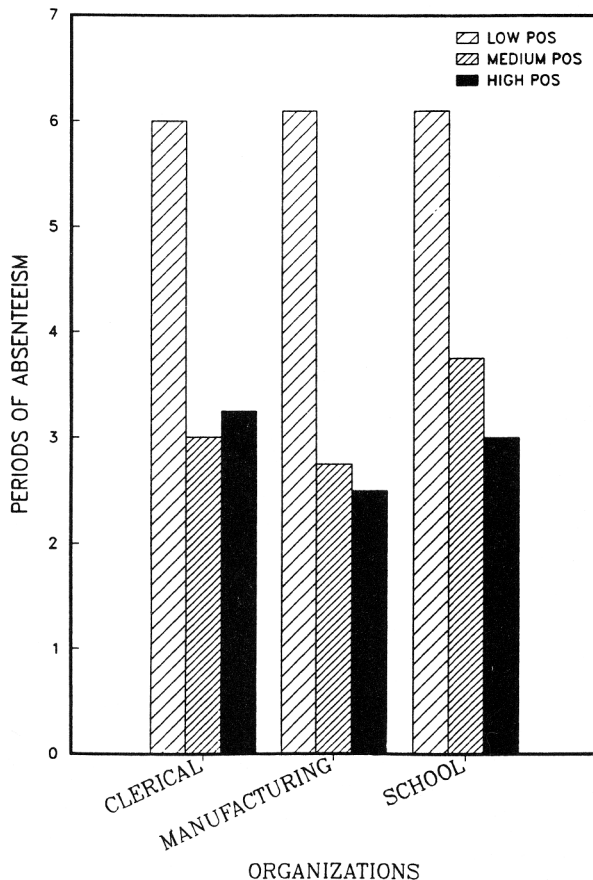


Figure 1. Average annual periods absent (blocks of one or more days) per employee in each of three organizations as a function of perceived organizational support (highest third of employees, middle third and lowest third).

For each occupation, an employee's performance score was obtained by adding his or her scores across rating dimensions and dividing by the number of dimensions. In the case of the police patrol officers, the performance measure was the number of discretionary citations and arrests. The average correlation between perceived support and performance, aggregated across occupations, was .33 ( $p < .001$ ). The correlations for the individual occupations are given in Table 1.

### Study 2: Perceived Support and Employee Innovation, Affective Attachment, and Performance-Reward Expectancies

Because perceived support should strengthen affective attachments to the organization, employees with high perceived support would be predicted to express stronger feelings of affiliation and loyalty. Perceived support should also be associated with expectancies that high performance would produce material rewards, such as pay and promotion, as well as social rewards, including approval and recognition. We examined the relationship of perceived support with expressed affective attachment and performance-reward expectancies.

In addition to the positive relationship found in the first study between perceived support and employees' diligence in carrying out conventional role responsibilities, perceived support might be associated with constructive innovation on behalf of the organization without the anticipation of direct reward or personal recognition. Previous studies of extrarole organizational citizenship behavior used self-reports or supervisory evaluations. Organ (1988) suggested the value for future research of using "an objective indicator of some—perhaps very specific—exemplar of organizational citizenship behavior" (Organ, 1988, p. 107). We therefore investigated the relationship between perceived support and the constructiveness of employees' anonymous suggestions for improving organizational effectiveness.

### Method

#### Sample and Measures

Hourly employees ( $N = 422$ ) and managerial employees ( $N = 109$ ) in a large steel plant were administered a questionnaire by the investigators at times set aside during regular work hours. The employees were given written and spoken assurances by the investigators, top management, and union officials that their individual responses would be held confidential and that only group data would be reported to the organization.

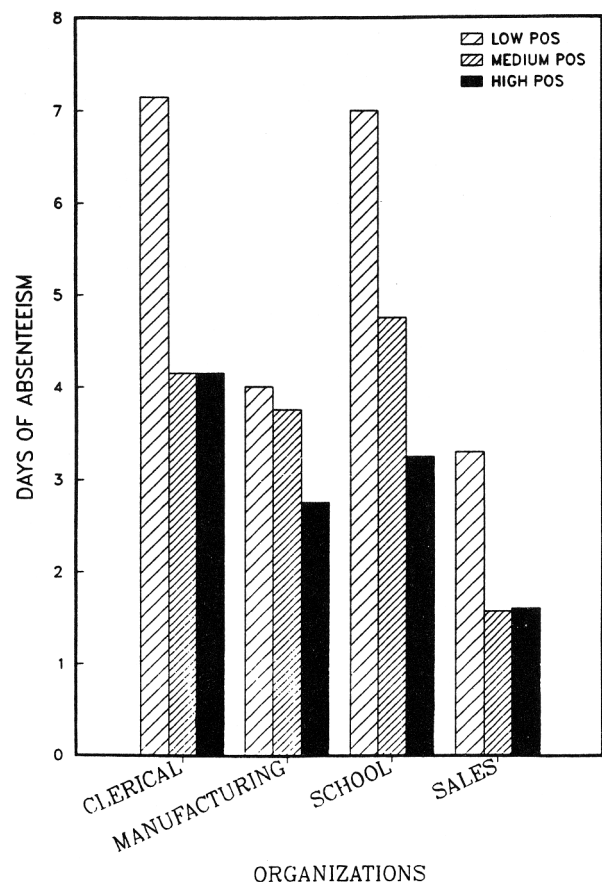


Figure 2. Average annual days absent per employee in each of four organizations as a function of perceived organizational support (highest third of employees, middle third, and lowest third).

The return rate for surveys with the attitudinal questions answered was 98%. Perceived support was measured with the short form of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support.

The measure of innovation consisted of the constructiveness of the employees' anonymous, optional responses to an open-ended survey question asking for "any suggestions you have for ways management can be kept better informed of your ideas for small or large changes that will improve productivity at [plant name]." The judges evaluating the suggestions were psychology graduate students and advanced undergraduates who were given general background information on the steel company. Each respondent's suggestions were typed on a separate index card, with the judges kept blind as to the respondents' perceived-support scores or any other identifying information. The judges were told to evaluate the suggestions on the degree to which they provided "a useful plan of action that was concrete and specific."

The suggestions of the hourly workers and managers were scored together. Two sets of four different judges evaluated the suggestions by different scoring procedures. The first used a Q-sort type procedure in which the number of respondents receiving a given rating was circumscribed in order to produce the symmetric, unimodal distribution recommended by Block (1978), with a mean of 5 and a range of 1 (*lowest*) to 9 (*highest*). Each judge, working alone, continued to reassign cards into adjacent bins associated with each rating until the required distribution was obtained. Next, the constructiveness score for each respondent was averaged across the four judges.

The second evaluation method, involving four other judges, required a consensus for each response on a five-category evaluation scale. Category 1 was labelled, "Not at all constructive—A suggestion that is unworkable, improbable, and difficult to carry out given organizational constraints." Category 5 was labelled, "Very highly constructive—Very concrete, detailed, specific plan of action that could feasibly be implemented given organizational constraints." The intervening categories were labelled with gradations of these endpoints. Each category was also tagged by an exemplar that was established by consensus of the judges, and the distribution of ratings was left up to the judges. The judges discussed the constructiveness of each respondent's suggestions until they agreed. Averaged constructiveness scores (Method 1) and consensus scores (Method 2) were used in parallel statistical analyses.

Emotional attachment to the organization was assessed by 7 of the 8 items from Meyer and Allen's (1984) Affective Commitment Scale and 2 OCQ items that seemed to most clearly express a positive regard and affective attachment to the organization (see the first 9 items in Table 2). Meyer and Allen reported that their scale had high internal consistency and was highly correlated with the OCQ. To assess employees' performance-reward expectancies, 9 performance-reward items from the Work-Related Expectancies Scale (Sims, Szilagyi, & McKemey, 1976) were used with slight modifications of wording. As would be predicted from expectancy theories of motivation, performance-reward expectancies as measured by the Work-Related Expectancies Scale were found to be much more strongly associated with supervisors' use of rewards than the use of punishments and discipline (Keller & Szilagyi, 1976; Sims et al., 1976). Incorporated into the Sims scale are a number of items previously used by House and Dessler (1974) to assess employees' expectancy that high performance would produce increased pay, promotions, or job security. The House-Dessler items have been found to have a unitary factor structure and high internal reliability (see also Dessler & Valenzi, 1977; Schuler, 1980). We used 5 items measuring expectancies of increased pay, promotion, or job security as well as 4 items concerning expectancies of approval, recognition, or influence from supervisors in the organization.

### Results

Perceived support was positively related to innovation as measured by the constructiveness of anonymous employee pro-

posals to aid the organization. Furthermore, employees with high perceived support expressed greater affective attachment to the organization and greater performance-reward expectancies. Factor analyses suggested that the employees distinguished two kinds of performance-reward expectancies, one expectancy related to pay and promotion and the other to approval, recognition, and influence. As predicted, perceived support was positively related to both of these types of performance-reward expectancies.

Responses to the optional open-ended question asking for employee suggestions were received from 168 employees (131 hourly workers and 37 managers). The first evaluation, using forced-distribution ratings by independent judges, produced an effective interrater correlation (Rosenthal, 1984) of .88 ( $p < .01$ ). Using Evaluation Method 1, there was a reliable correlation between perceived support and constructiveness for the hourly workers ( $r = .19, p < .01$ ) and for the managers ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ). Using Evaluation Method 2, which correlated .83 with the Evaluation Method 1, perceived support was also reliably related to constructiveness for the hourly workers ( $r = .21, p < .01$ ) and the managers ( $r = .34, p < .05$ ).

Figure 3 presents the average constructiveness scores (Evaluation Method 1) for hourly employees and managers with the highest-third, middle-third, and lowest-third levels of perceived support. There was a reliable relationship between perceived support and constructiveness for both the hourly employees and managers, respectively,  $F(2, 128) = 3.77, p < .05$ , and  $F(2, 34) = 3.96, p < .05$ . The hourly and managerial employees with the highest-third levels of perceived support gave more constructive suggestions than did those with lowest-third levels,  $t(128) = 2.67, p < .005$ , and  $t(34) = 3.70, p < .001$ , respectively. Evaluation Method 2 also produced reliable overall effects for the hourly and managerial employees,  $F(2, 128) = 4.60, p < .01$ , and  $F(2, 34) = 3.28, p < .05$ , respectively. Again, the hourly and managerial employees with high perceived support gave more constructive answers than those with low perceived support,  $t(128) = 2.97, p < .005$ , and  $t(34) = 2.46, p < .01$ .

Perceived support would be expected to be positively related both to expressed affective attachment and performance-reward expectancies, resulting in a moderate positive correlation between these two types of commitment. Principal components analyses on the combined set of affective-attachment and performance-reward expectancy items, conducted separately for the hourly and managerial employees, produced three distinct factors rather than the expected two. The presence of the third factor was indicated for both samples of employees by a clear break in the scree plot and an eigenvalue greater than 1.0. Varimax and oblique rotations were carried out, and the results were compared. Both types of rotation produced the same three factors.

Table 2 presents the results for the varimax rotation. All the affective attachment items loaded primarily on their own factor. The performance-reward items split into two factors, one concerning pay and promotion and the other related to approval, recognition, and influence. An additional principal components analysis that was limited to the performance-expectancy items again produced two distinct calculative factors, as indicated by breaks in the scree plot and by eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Varimax and oblique rotations resulted in the same two

Table 2  
*Factor Analyses on Affective Attachment and Expectancy Items*

Statement	Hourly			Managerial		
	Factor loading			Factor loading		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
1. Working at _____ has a lot of personal meaning for me.	.84	.08	.08	.83	.02	.13
2. I feel a strong sense of belonging to _____.	.81	.16	.20	.82	.21	.23
3. I am proud to tell others that I work for _____.	.79	.08	.20	.63	.34	.26
4. I feel emotionally attached to _____.	.74	.15	.16	.84	.07	.12
5. I would be happy to work at _____ until I retire.	.72	.04	-.04	.54	.06	.03
6. I enjoy discussing _____ with people outside of it.	.71	.12	.21	.65	.26	.34
7. _____ does not deserve my loyalty. (R)	-.60	-.12	-.03	-.62	-.16	.18
8. I really feel that any problems faced by _____ are also my problems.	.59	.22	.09	.55	.09	.32
9. I do not feel like part of a family at _____. (R)	-.48	-.11	-.34	-.56	-.21	-.19
10. It is more likely that I will be given a pay raise or promotion at _____ if I finish a large amount of work.	.09	.87	.08	.16	.84	.11
11. It is more likely that I will be given a pay raise or promotion at _____ if I do high quality work.	.20	.84	.09	.29	.82	.13
12. Getting work done quickly at _____ increases my chances for a pay raise or promotion.	.07	.76	.14	.10	.76	.17
13. Getting work done on time is rewarded with high pay at _____.	.18	.71	.19	.24	.76	.25
14. Completing my work done on time gets me greater approval from my immediate supervisor at _____.	.21	.15	.83	.20	.15	.89
15. My immediate supervisor at _____ gives me more recognition when I get a lot of work done.	.08	.08	.83	-.07	.21	.76
16. If I get my job done on time, I have more influence with my immediate supervisor at _____.	.16	.14	.72	.31	.18	.71
17. My immediate supervisor at _____ pays added attention to the opinions of the best workers.	.11	.11	.71	.08	.03	.79
18. When I finish my job on time, my job is more secure at _____.	.37	.36	.37	.21	.37	.52

Note.  $N = 422$  for hourly production employees;  $N = 109$  for managerial production employees. (R) indicates that item is reverse-scored. All scale correlations with perceived support are statistically reliable at the .001 level, one-tailed.

calculative factors as when the affective-attachment items had been included in the factor analyses.

Each of the three scales (affective attachment, pay/promotion expectancies, and approval/recognition/influence expectancies), which comprised the items differentiating the separate

factors, had high internal reliability. The alpha coefficients ranged from .81 to .89. The correlations between scales were moderate, ranging from .33 to .35 for the hourly workers and from .38 to .47 for the managers. These findings indicate a moderate overlap between affective and calculative involvements.

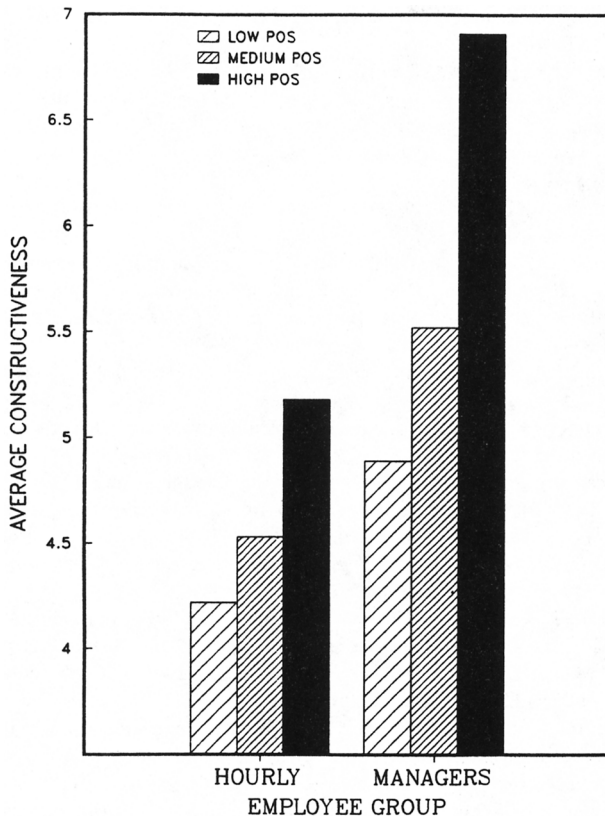


Figure 3. Average constructiveness rating per employee for each group as a function of perceived organizational support (highest third of employees, middle third, and lowest third).

For hourly employees, the correlations of perceived support with expressed affective attachment, pay/promotion expectancies, and approval/recognition/influence expectancies were .64, .46, and .35, respectively (all  $ps < .001$ ). The corresponding correlations for the managers were .64, .54, and .38, all  $ps < .001$ . Thus, as predicted, perceived support was positively related to expressed affective and calculative organizational involvements.

### General Discussion

Our findings are that employees' general perception of being valued and cared about by the organization is positively related to (a) conscientiousness in carrying out conventional job responsibilities, (b) expressed affective and calculative involvements in the organization, and (c) innovation on behalf of the organization in the absence of anticipated direct reward or personal recognition. In the first study we found that perceived support was positively associated with standard job activities, as indicated by attendance and performance measures. Among the four occupations for which job attendance data were available, the third of the employees with the lowest perceived support were absent almost twice as often, on the average, as the third with the highest perceived support. Perceived support was also related to supervisors' evaluations in the three occupations

for which data was available and to the number of tickets issued by police patrol officers.

The second study, involving hourly and managerial steel-manufacturing employees, found positive relationships of perceived support with affective attachment and calculative involvement. Employees who perceived high support expressed stronger feelings of affiliation and loyalty to the organization. This result is similar to previous findings of greater emotional involvement by employees who believed that their contribution was highly regarded (Buchanan, 1974; Pearce & Porter, 1986; Steers, 1977). Employees with high perceived support additionally expressed stronger expectancies that high effort would produce material rewards involving pay and promotion, as well as social rewards including approval and recognition. Perceived support was also positively related to employee innovation. The constructiveness of anonymous, voluntary suggestions for improving the organization was greater by those perceiving that the organization valued their contribution and cared about their well-being. Such innovative suggestions are important to the organization's growth and success (Katz, 1964; Smith et al., 1983).

These results favor the extension and integration of emotion-based and calculative theories of organizational commitment into a social-exchange approach. We suggest that, to meet needs for approval, affiliation, and esteem and to determine the organization's readiness to reward greater effort, employees form a global belief concerning the organization's commitment to them (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Perceived support would promote the incorporation of organizational membership and role status into employees' self-identity. The resulting affective attachment would increase performance by (a) raising the tendency to interpret the organization's gains and losses as the employee's own, (b) creating evaluation biases in judging the organization's actions and characteristics, and (c) increasing the internalization of the organization's values and norms.

Social-exchange processes may also play an important role in calculative involvement. Perceived support would create trust that the organization will fulfill its exchange obligations of noticing and rewarding employee efforts made on its behalf (cf. Blau, 1964; Cook & Wall, 1980; Organ & Konovsky, 1989). Employees with high perceived support would be more committed to fulfilling the role requirements of their jobs and would be less inclined to seek and accept jobs in other organizations (Becker, 1960; Farrell & Rusbult, 1981; Koslowski et al., 1988; Meyer & Allen, 1984; Rusbult & Farrell, 1983). Perceived support would also establish a trust in the long-term fairness of the organization to recompense extrarole performance (Organ & Konovsky, 1989).

Perceived support was found to be positively related both to attitudinal and behavioral measures of affective attachment. The assessment of voluntary, anonymous employee suggestions for improving organizational operations helps fill the need noted by Organ (1988) for an objective measure of organizational citizenship behavior. Because employee suggestions were anonymous and therefore independent of anticipated recognition or direct personal gain, the results suggest that citizenship behavior results, in part, from an affective attachment to the organization (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Organ, 1988).

The positive relationship of perceived support with perfor-

mance–outcome expectancy should be interpreted more cautiously than the affective-attachment findings because of possible method variance that could result from the use of questionnaire responses to measure both factors. The association of perceived support with conventional job performance, as reported in the first study, could be due to instrumental involvement or affective attachment, or both. To obtain a clearer assessment of instrumental involvement per se, future research might systematically compare citizenship behavior under public versus anonymous circumstances.

A causal link between perceived organizational support and various kinds of employee involvement cannot, of course, be established from the correlational data reported in our studies. The relationship may be bidirectional. Perceived high support would lead employees to increase diligence in carrying out standard job responsibilities and to enhance participation in extra-role citizenship behavior, both of which often produce more favorable treatment from the organization (Blau, 1964). Conversely, perceived low support would lessen employee involvement, leading to worse treatment and still lower perceived support.

Another issue that requires study is the suggestion that perceived support depends on *discretionary* treatment by the organization. Benefits such as increases in pay, health insurance, rank, job enrichment, and decentralization of decision making would be predicted to enhance perceived support to the extent that these signified positive evaluations. The same treatments, if attributed by employees to such extraneous factors as government regulations or forced contractual obligations, should have much less effect on perceived support.

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Received March 22, 1989

Revision received July 14, 1989

Accepted July 14, 1989 ■

### Call for Nominations for *Psychological Bulletin*

The Publications and Communications Board has opened nominations for a new editor of *Psychological Bulletin*. John C. Masters is the immediate past editor. Candidates must be members of APA and should be prepared to begin receiving manuscripts by September 1990. Please note that the P&C Board encourages participation by members of underrepresented groups in the publications process and would particularly welcome such nominees. To nominate candidates, prepare a statement of one page or less in support of each candidate. Submit nominations to:

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Other members of the search committee are Ann Brown, Lynn Ann Cooper, Alan Kazdin, and Bruce Sales. First review of nominations will begin March 1, 1990, although the nomination deadline is March 31, 1990.